Rec'd - 30,000 - 8-20-69
New - Hancock

FACT SHEET

L-822

COLLECTING AND STORING PECAN PROPAGATION WOOD

Bluefford G. Hancock and J. Benton Storey*

Successful propagation of pecans is dependent on the availability of suitable bud and graftwood of the desired variety. Since this wood must be collected in late winter during the dormant season and stored until spring propagation time, the entire handling process requires extreme care. The procedure outlined here refers to collecting and storing graftwood for inlay bark grafting and budwood for patch-budding.

Collect bud and graftwood in late February or early March while the tree is still dormant. Select desired parent trees of known variety that are free of damage from obscure scale, rosette or disease. Young, vigorous trees produce abundant, smooth and large-sized current season wood. Moderate-sized pecan trees making normal growth usually have good propagation wood in their uppermost limbs. Older trees can be dehorned to force vigorous new growth satisfactory for propagation wood.

*Extension horticulturist and associate professor, horticulture section, Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, Texas A&M University.

Reproduced from *The Pecan Quarterly*.

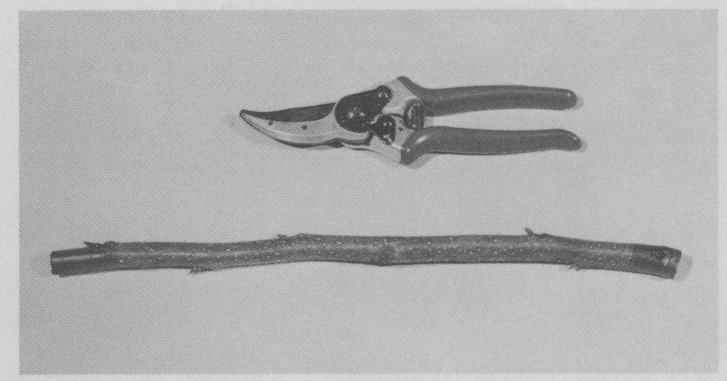

Fig. 1. Optimum budwood diameter is ⅜ to ¾ inch; 1-inch diameter is maximum. Select 1-year wood (current season) that is round and mature gray or grayish-green. Avoid wood with green, tender bark and flat sides.

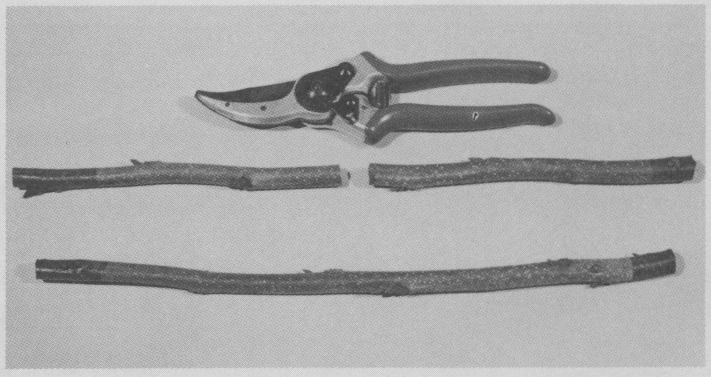

Fig. 2. Select straight, smooth graftwood from 1-year wood ¼ to ½ inch in diameter. Cut wood for grafts into 12 to 18-inch lengths to give two or three graft sticks. Each graft stick should contain approximately three buds (nodes), as shown.

19.2 Should be 16.2

Fig. 3. On suitable bud or graftwood, there are three to four buds at each leaf scar (node). Buds should be plump and prominent. Smaller reserve buds serve as insurance since they will force into growth if the primary or secondary buds are lost or damaged.

Fig. 5. Label all propagation wood by making a slash cut on the lower end of a bud or graft stick. Print name of variety on cut with a lead pencil. A mistake on pecan varieties can last a lifetime and be costly.

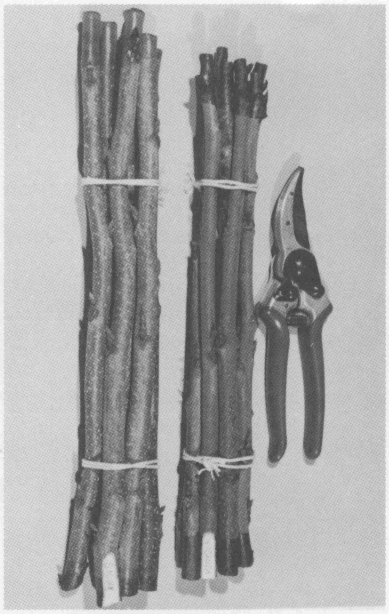

Fig. 6. Tie propagation wood into bundles. Secure each end of the bundle with twine to prevent sticks from moving and losing primary buds. Dip each end of the bundle into warm melted wax or paraffin to prevent excessive drying.

Fig. 4. One-year pecan budwood, left, compared with 2-year wood. Note the large plump buds on 1-year wood. The 2-year wood has lost all primary buds and most secondary buds. This is why it is harder to force buds into growth when 2-year wood is used.

Fig. 7. Pack pecan bud or graftwood in moist (not wet) media, such as sphagnum moss or sawdust and shavings mixed half and half. Wooden boxes, crates or metal cans with tight-fitting lids can be used as storage containers. Polyethylene bags, as shown, make excellent storage containers. Keep wood under cold storage conditons within a temperature range of 30 to 38 degrees F.

When the budding and grafting season arrives:

1. Take graftwood directly from cold storage and use it immediately while the bark is tight and the wood still dormant.

2. Budwood must be seasoned so that the bark will slip. Remove the wood from cold storage. Leave it in the moist media in the container. Place at room temperature or above (up to 80 to 85 degrees F.) 4 to 5 days or until bark will slip readily. Use this seasoned wood immediately or place back in cold storage for a short time.

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, Texas A&M University and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating. Distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8, 1914, as amended, and June 30, 1914.
30M—6-69